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ERIOGONUM ×AMMEI (POLYGONACEAE), A NEW GARDEN HYBRID

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ABSTRACT

An unusual hybrid seedling involving California's insular endemic *Eriogonum arborescens* and a shrub common to the Mojave Desert, *E. fasciculatum* var. *polifolium*, was discovered in a California nursery, which grew rapidly to form a low, spreading shrub up to 1 m high and 3.5 m across with large, cymose, densely flowered inflorescences bearing white, slightly pubescent flowers. The new hybrid is named here as **Eriogonum ×ammei** Reveal & Veilleux, **hybid. nov.**

Hybrid populations involving insular and coastal species of *Eriogonum* Michx. (Polygonaceae Juss.: *Eriogoneae* Dumort.) are occasionally encountered along the coast of California as a result of the unfortunately widespread use of *E. giganteum* S. Watson and, to a lesser extent, *E. arborescens* Greene, in roadside plantings by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). As a result, hybrid populations involving St. Catherine's-Lace, *E. giganteum* var. *giganteum*, and coastal populations of *E. fasciculatum* Benth. (California buckwheat), and *E. cinereum* Benth. (coastal wild buckwheat), are found where these entities are in close proximity. A garden hybrid involving the two insular species, *E. arborescens* and *E. giganteum*, was known for many years before named *E. ×blissianum* by Herbert Mason in 1938. The latter is still widely planted mainly as a decorative plant around homes and in parks.

The discovery of another garden hybrid, especially one that grows to a large size in a matter of months, and is even more decorative than *Eriogonum ×blissianum*, means that the hybrid has the potential of being an important new introduction into the California garden flora.

Eriogonum ×ammei Reveal & Veilleux, **hybid. nov.** **TYPE. USA. California.** Alameda Co.: East Bay Wilds Native Plant Nursery, 28th Avenue at Foothill Boulevard, Oakland, 8 Oct 2013, *P. Veilleux s.n.* (holotype: BH). Figures 1–3.

The East Bay wild buckwheat, *Eriogonum ×ammei*, differs from its maternal parent, *E. arborescens*, by its fasculate leaves and broad leaf blades 0.3–0.8 (–1) cm wide (not solitary and 0.1–0.4(–0.6) cm wide) and from the paternal parent by the large, cymose inflorescence (not capitate to cymose-umbellate or rarely cymose), the cinereous lower surface of the leaf blade (not canescent or tomentose), and from both parents by its low, spreading habit and ability to grow to a large size so rapidly.

Plants low, spreading, fast-growing shrubs, 5–10 dm tall, 20–35 dm across, sparsely canescent; ***stems*** spreading, without persistent leaf bases, up to 1/2 height of plant, the aerial

flowering stems slender, solid, not fistulose, 0.5–1 (2) dm long, sparsely canescent; ***leaves*** cauline, fasciculate, the petioles 0.1–0.2 cm long, tomentose, the blades mostly narrowly elliptic, 0.5–3.5 cm long, 0.3–0.8 (1) cm wide, densely white cinereous (except for midvein and lateral veins) abaxially, dark green and essentially glabrous adaxially, the margins plane; ***inflorescences*** cymose, 2–3.5 dm tall, 2–5.5 dm across; sparsely canescent; ***peduncles*** absent; ***involucres*** solitary but in tight, congested clusters, turbinate to turbinate-campanulate, 3–4 mm long, 2–3.5 mm wide, sparsely canescent, the teeth 5, erect, 0.5–1 mm long; ***flowers*** 2.5–3.5 mm long, white in anthesis, becoming rose in fruit, white-villous on the hypanthium and along the lower third of the midrib abaxially, the tepals monomorphic, broadly obovate, the stamens exserted, 2.5–4 mm long, the filaments pilose proximally, the anthers pink; ***achenes*** trigonous, brown, 2.5–3 mm long, glabrous.

The hybrid is named for David G. Amme, long associated with the East Bay Regional Park District, now retired, who is known for his work on grasses, especially native grass horticulture, grassland restoration, and roadside management, and as a distinguished author on environmental matters.

LITERATURE CITED

Mason, H. L. 1938. A hybrid *Eriogonum*. Madroño 4: 290.

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Figure 1. *Eriogonum ×ammei* Reveal & Veilleux.

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Figures 2 and 3. *Eriogonum ×ammei* Reveal & Veilleux